



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor
Scott Hassett, Secretary
John Gozdziński, Regional Director

Northern Region Headquarters
107 Sutliff Ave.
Rhinelander, Wisconsin 54501-3349
Telephone 715-365-8900
FAX 715-365-8932
TTY Access via relay - 711

November 2, 2005

Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
Washington, DC 20423

Subject: WI DNR comments to EA document AB-303 (Sub. No. 29X)

Dear Diana:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment regarding the proposed abandonment of the Wisconsin Central Ltd. (WCL) rail line from Milepost 235.84 to Milepost 231.22 on the Pembine Sub in Forest County. We have reviewed the EA and offer the following comments.

- 1) To protect waterways and wetlands during the salvage operations we suggest that in addition to minimizing disturbance to the greatest extent possible, that best management practices be installed in accordance with state and federal storm water standards in any area where there is disturbance.
- 2) DNR staff field reviewed the corridor with Mark Bauer of Wisconsin Central Ltd. on June 15th, 2005. At the time of the inspection there were a number of corridor crossings, town roads, private driveways, and personal property that may have been located within the corridor right-of-way (ROW). Please indicate the width of the ROW, which crossings are legal, and whether or not any easements were given for town roads and driveways along grade within the ROW. Additionally, please indicate the extent to which WCL will need to address these potential ROW issues before abandonment.
- 3) Please indicate whether or not the proposed abandonment will end 45 feet north of HWY 8 in Crandon. Abandonment of the trail so that it ends to the north of HWY 8 will facilitate safe access into Crandon if it is converted to use as a recreational trail in the future.
- 4) It may be useful for the reader to briefly mention that the DNR will need to comply with the requirements of the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act before the corridor can be obtained by the State of Wisconsin. This process will outline the potential environmental issues associated with the proposed use of the corridor as a recreational trail and will also give the public the opportunity to comment on the potential acquisition project.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this document and look forward to continued coordination with you and WCL on this project.

Sincerely,

Jon Simonsen
Environmental Review Coordinator

cc: Terry Jordan – DNR, Spooner
Richard Steffes – DNR, Madison, LF/6
James Pardee – DNR, Madison
David Ziolkowski – Forest County
Diane Brusoe – Planning Strategies